

SECRET

3 April 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: SB/RR

SUBJECT : Information from Project AERODYNAMIC about
Ukrainian Catholic Priests in the Soviet
Union and some student political opinions

1. The information in the attached is in sterile form. It was obtained by AECASSOWARY/29 (usually reliable) from the source (untested but believed to be reliable), the wife of a Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate) priest, whose husband was forced to become a "convert" to the Orthodox faith in the 1940's and later deprived of his Orthodox priesthood. Source's husband (now 72 years of age) first served as a Catholic priest in a village in Zakerzonya (behind the Curzon), but was forced to move to a village near Sambor and to accept Orthodoxy. He was dismissed from his parochial duties in the village near Sambor, Western Ukraine, in 1960, and forced to move to Truskavets, where he and his wife operated a tourist home until their emigration to Canada in July of 1966.

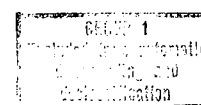
2. Please direct any questions you may have concerning this report to ☐ ☐ on extension 6508, room 3B4804.

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Acting Chief, SB/S/CA

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

*Brant
3 March 67
report from
Savchak*

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INFORMATION ABOUT A UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC PRIEST IN THE
SOVIET UNION AND STUDENT POLITICAL OPINIONS

SOURCE: The wife of a Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate) priest, whose husband was forced to become a "convert" to the Orthodox faith in the 1940's and later deprived of his Orthodox priesthood.

1. Source's husband (a former Catholic priest of the Byzantine Rite who was forced in the mid 1940's to accept the Orthodox faith) was dismissed from his duties as the Orthodox parish priest in a village in the Western Ukraine in 1960, because he permitted his brother-in-law, a Catholic priest, (practicing underground) to celebrate a Mass in his church. From 1960 until their emigration to the West in the summer of 1966, source and her husband operated a tourist home in a Ukrainian resort town, which enjoys special administrative status of a resort of all-union importance, directly subordinated to the Lvov Obkom. It draws many tourists and convalescents from various parts of the Ukraine and from Russia. Fifty percent of the local population is Russian, with Russian and East Ukrainians predominating in the Mis'kom (Gorkom) and the Mis'krada (Gorsoviet). Ukrainians were gaining prominence, mostly in positions of secondary importance, when the source and her husband left. The resort had a KGB plenipotentiary (upolnomochenny) who was about 35 years old. There were two desiatyletkas in the area, one Ukrainian and the other Russian.

2. Most of the guests in the Subject's tourist home were young students from eastern Ukrainian cities. Many of the students were directly associated with a number of the young Ukrainian intellectuals who were arrested in 1965/1966. The source was taken into the students' confidence. They showed her various documents and asked her to hide some of them. One of the documents they showed her was an account of the fire at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kiev in 1964, in which document the Soviets were accused of deliberate arson. The students frequently asked the source to teach them old Ukrainian "patriotic" songs and to relate what Ukrainian history she knew. They were particularly interested in political literature published prior to 1939. Source had opportunity to read some of students' poetry, much of which was about Ukrainians who died in the fight against the Russian occupiers in the 1940's. Source listened to the students' discussions on various topics. On the basis of what she heard them talk about, the source said she would say they favored a Communist government, free of Russian chauvinism and bureaucracy, a sovereign socialist Ukraine within a true confederation of states, or a completely independent Ukraine. They felt there was a need for better communication among those

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individuals seeking changes in the present government but objected to any terrorist activity against the regime. They felt the current struggle for changes in the Ukraine should be directed toward restoring true socialist principles in the Soviet nationalities policy, based on genuine Leninist directives and constitutional prerogatives. Although they preferred a system of government where there were at least two political parties, they approved of dictatorship in times of emergency. They placed no hopes for any encouragement or aid from the West, citing the Hungarian uprising as an example of Western indifference. Only Red China could, in their opinion, force the Soviet Union into a position from which the republics could benefit. Source was of the opinion that West Ukrainians sympathized with the present Sino-Soviet conflict for no other reason than the fact that they would sympathize with anyone creating problems for their "older brother".

3. Some of the "illegal" Uniate Catholic clergy (those who continued to practice Catholicism underground) took a hostile position toward the Ecumenical Council, and they renounced their allegiance to the Pope. They formed a group which condemned the dialogue between the Vatican and "the devil" (Russian Orthodoxy hierarchy), proclaiming themselves the only uncompromising representatives of God's will, who must atone for the sins of the Pope and the rest of the Catholic hierarchy involved in the Council. They became known as "Pokutnyky" (from the word pokuta, or penance). One of this group, a Reverend fnu Potochniak, of Boryslav, proclaimed himself the Ukrainian Catholic pope. The general consensus among Ukrainians was that the "converted church" (those Catholic priests who accepted Orthodoxy) was one of the methods used to Russify the Ukraine.

4. Archbishop Nikolay of Lvov (the former Evhen Yuryk), like all other bishops and archbishops in the Soviet Union, enjoys "divine authority" but few administrative powers. In 1960, when the source's husband was deprived of his priesthood, it was by order of the upolnomochenny for church affairs, who sat in the bishop's chancery in St. George's Cathedral, and not by order of the Archbishop. When the source's husband appealed to Archbishop Nikolay, the latter said he would pray for him but that the final decision would be made by the upolnomochenny.

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